



Office of
Representative Hannah E. Kane
Commonwealth of Massachusetts

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 28, 2024

CONTACT: Kerry Shea, 617-722-2810

Representative Kane supports passage of comprehensive \$4B economic development bond bill

Will fund life sciences, climate technology, AI grants, and public infrastructure

BOSTON – State Representative Hannah Kane (R-Shrewsbury) recently supported a comprehensive economic development bond bill that calls for just over \$4 billion in investments to promote business and job growth across a wide range of industries in Massachusetts.

House Bill 4789, *An Act relative to strengthening Massachusetts' economic leadership*, provides for a multi-year commitment to the life sciences, climate technology, manufacturing, workforce development, public infrastructure improvements, and other critical areas, including funding to support the adoption and application of artificial intelligence capabilities to public policy problems. Also known as the Mass Leads Act, House Bill 4789 was engrossed by the House of Representatives on a vote of 155-2 on June 27.

During floor debate, Representative Kane successfully advocated for the funding of local projects in her district, including \$75,000 for an economic development strategy to promote business development along Route 20, \$25,000 for the Façade Improvement Program to assist property owners and business tenants in Shrewsbury's town center with commercial building façade renovation and exterior feature improvements, and \$150,000 for the construction of multimodal transportation enhancements and urban park enhancements in Shrewsbury's town center business district. Representative Kane and Representative Kate Donaghue (D-Westborough) co-filed successful amendments for \$1,575,000 for improved infrastructure and roadways on Otis Street and \$400,000 for economic development projects in Westborough, including the creation of an electric vehicle station plan, costs associated with rotary redesign, sidewalk improvements, and municipal parking improvements. She noted that this proposed bond funding is preliminary, as it still requires approval by the Senate and Governor Maura Healey, and must be worked under the state's annual borrowing cap, a process which could take several years.

Representative Kane noted the House bill provides for approximately \$3.3 billion in bond authorizations and another \$700 million in tax credits, including a new five-year tax credit pilot program for live theater productions, which will be capped at \$7 million a year. The bill also expands the existing life sciences tax credit by lifting the annual cap from \$30 million to \$50 million, and provides \$580 million for the Massachusetts Life Sciences Breakthrough Fund, formerly known as the Massachusetts Life Sciences Investment Fund, to help reinforce Massachusetts' position as a leader in developing health-related innovations.

House Bill 4789 also focuses on climate technology, or "climatetech," to help Massachusetts compete in a growing national and global clean energy marketplace. The bill defines "climatetech" as "clean energy, other advanced, and applied technologies that contribute to the decarbonization of the economy, reduce and mitigate greenhouse gas emissions, or mitigate the impacts of climate change through adaptation, resiliency and environmental sustainability." Currently, 28 of the top 100 companies in the United States that meet the definition of a climatetech company are located in Massachusetts, and the UMASS Donahue Institute has indicated the Commonwealth could realize a \$16 billion return on its investment in climatetech.

According to Representative Kane, the House bill commits \$400 million over 10 years for a network of climatetech pilot programs and directs \$300 million toward other climatetech initiatives, including a \$35 million annual offshore wind tax credit and a new climatetech tax incentive program worth up to \$30 million annually.

In addition, House Bill 4789 provides \$100 million for a capital grant program to leverage emerging AI technologies in a variety of sectors, including life sciences, healthcare and hospitals, financial services, advanced manufacturing, robotics and education. The program will be administered by the Massachusetts Technology Park Corporation and will also be used “to support the incubation of artificial intelligence firms, advance the adoption of artificial intelligence technologies and support artificial intelligence software and hardware technology development and commercialization activities.”

Representative Kane said House Bill 4789 also expands and modernizes portions of the Massachusetts General Laws pertaining to the State Athletic Commission, particularly as it relates to combat sports. In addition to establishing a State Athletic Commission Fund to cover the commission’s expenses, the bill requires that license holders for combat sports events take out at least a \$10,000 insurance policy and adds provisions to ensure that contests are conducted safely and fairly.

The House bill also addresses the issue of event ticketing by requiring ticket sellers to provide customers with the option of buying a physical ticket, and limiting the ability to sell tickets on the secondary market to only those entities that have been approved by the commissioner of occupational licensure. The bill also prohibits consumers from using “ticket purchasing software,” which is defined as any device, machine, or computer software designed to bypass or subvert an online ticket seller’s security apparatus or identification authentication process.

Representative Kane said House Bill 4789 also includes:

- \$150 million in municipal grants for approved public library projects;
- \$8 million for a grant program for the preservation of historic properties, landscapes and sites;
- \$50 million for the Massachusetts Cultural Facilities Fund for constructing, repairing, renovating, or addressing deferred maintenance needs at a cultural facility;
- \$100 million in grants for coastal communities, to be administered by the Seaport Economic Council, to create jobs in the maritime economy sector, and to construct, improve, repair, maintain and protect coastal assets;
- \$200 million for the Massachusetts Offshore Wind Industry Investment Trust Fund to support the offshore wind industry and facilitate economic development activity;
- \$200 million for the Clean Energy Investment Fund to promote jobs, economic and workforce development for research and the development, innovation, manufacturing, commercialization and deployment of climatetech technologies in Massachusetts;
- \$400 million for the MassWorks infrastructure program;
- \$100 million for the rural development program;
- \$30 million for the Brownfields Development Fund;
- \$99 million for the Massachusetts Technology Park Corporation for grant programs that support collaboration among Massachusetts-based manufacturers and institutions of higher education, non-profits, or other public or quasi-public entities;
- \$25 million for a capital grant program to provide grants or other financial assistance to private businesses that are constructing or expanding commercial, industrial or manufacturing facilities in the commonwealth, including projects that minimize or eliminate the use of fossil-fuel heating and cooling equipment; and
- a proposal to rename the Boston Convention Center as the Thomas Michael Menino Convention and Exhibition Center in honor of the late Boston mayor;

During floor debate, several amendments were adopted, including proposals to:

- create an Educator Diversity Fund, direct the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) to create alternative pathways to educator certification, and require every school district in the Commonwealth to hire a full time (Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) officer;
- remove the testing requirement for certified social workers and create a field placement grant program in the form of financial assistance to those in education and training for social work; and
- provide civil service communities with a hybrid option that would allow them to fill up to 50% of job openings with exam exemptions and would expand the residency requirements for initial applicants to include individuals who reside within a 10-mile radius of the community, with the option to expand the 10-mile radius even further through a collective bargaining agreement.

House Bill 4789, as amended, now moves to the Senate for its consideration.

###